

# News Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*\*Updated\**



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## **Celebrate National Train Day at the California State Railroad Museum – May 11** *Free Admission, Amtrak Tours & More!*

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – On Saturday, May 11, 2013, Amtrak, Union Pacific Railroad, California State Parks and the California State Railroad Museum will proudly celebrate the sixth annual National Train Day by offering free Museum admission, tours of modern-day *Amtrak California* passenger cars, the opportunity to see a Union Pacific “Genset” switcher locomotive and special rail-related activities inside and outside the Museum! And, to add to the celebration and extend the fun, the nearby Sacramento History Museum in Old Sacramento will also offer free museum admission on this special day. The event is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. this one day only, kicking off promptly at 10 a.m. with opening remarks by invited guests that will take place at the California State Railroad Museum. Sacramento joins more than 200 communities across the nation that will hold National Train Day events.

“I’m delighted to celebrate National Train Day at the California State Railroad Museum and focus attention on why trains matter to the country, including the important national mission of Amtrak, America’s Railroad,” said Amtrak President & CEO Joe Boardman. “Trains matter because they connect our towns, employ our residents and serve as an engine of economic development.”

In addition to an already impressive collection of lavishly restored trains and engaging exhibits, visitors to the Railroad Museum will enjoy an abundance of visually-enticing and hands-on options during National Train Day. They will see a 2,000-horsepower Union Pacific locomotive known as a “Genset” switcher that is powered by three 667-horsepower ultra-low-emission U.S. Environmental Protection Agency off-road Tier 3-certified diesel engines. Guests will also have the opportunity to tour sleek, comfortable *Amtrak California* passenger cars and experience what train travel is like today, while also exploring decades of rail transportation history that literally transformed America. Guests will also have the opportunity to learn more about train travel options in California by watching short films, browsing timetables and travel literature, and talking with rail transportation providers. Eye-catching railroad equipment from the Museum’s collection of vintage locomotives and railroad cars will also be part of the celebratory event. Always popular, rides aboard the Museum’s Interpretive Handcar and a children’s “Chuggington Station” activity area will all be part of the fun on this special day.

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“Sacramento is pleased to join Amtrak in celebrating National Train Day at the California State Railroad Museum,” said Sacramento City Councilman Steve Cohn. “Sacramento has a glorious and shared history with railroads from the Gold Rush in 1849 and the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 to the present day. For nearly a century, the Southern Pacific Railroad’s Central Shops – today’s Downtown Sacramento Railyards -- were the region’s biggest employer. Today, due to a successful partnership between local, state, federal and private partners, Sacramento is home to the seventh busiest Amtrak station in the country.”

While visiting the Railroad Museum on National Train Day, guests are encouraged to make a special stop to see the “Lost Spike” -- a virtual and all-but-forgotten twin of the famous “Golden Spike” – that is on permanent display. Immediately adjacent to the “Lost Spike” is the epic 19th century oil painting “The Last Spike,” created by artist Thomas Hill; the very first locomotive of the Transcontinental Railroad, Central Pacific No. 1 Gov. Stanford; and many other artifacts and exhibits covering railroad history and the diverse workers who built and maintained and operated California’s railroads. In addition, guests are encouraged to walk a short two blocks in Old Sacramento to see a new commemorative sign at Front & K Streets that marks the starting point for the Central Pacific Railroad, one of two companies that together would construct America’s first transcontinental railroad. In fact, 150 years ago – on January 8, 1863 – California Governor Leland Stanford turned a ceremonial shovelful of earth marking the start of construction for the Transcontinental Railroad in the West.

“National Train Day is a perfect time to visit the Railroad Museum to learn more about the history of the railroad and understand its huge and lasting impact on our daily lives,” said Paul Hammond, Museum Director for the California State Railroad Museum, part of the California State Parks System. “It’s also a perfect opportunity to see that trains aren’t just a part of America’s past. Trains are playing important roles today right here in California, and they also offer green transportation solutions for a better tomorrow.”

As another option, the Museum’s weekend excursion trains will be running as usual on National Train Day and regular train ride ticket prices will apply. Trains depart on-the-hour from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. from the Central Pacific Railroad Freight Depot in Old Sacramento (located on Front Street between J and K Streets). Train ride guests will experience the sights, smells and sounds of an authentic, vintage locomotive as it rolls along the levees of the Sacramento River for a six-mile, 45-minute roundtrip excursion. Appealing to all ages, the excursion train ride experience offers guests the opportunity to enjoy train travel from an earlier era. The train features a combination of vintage closed coaches with comfortable seats, and open-air “gondolas” with bench style seating. Same-day regular weekend excursion train ride tickets are available in-person on a first-come, first-served basis starting at 10:30 a.m. the day of the train ride. Regular excursion train tickets cost \$10 for adults, \$5 for youths (ages 6-17), and ages 5 and under ride free. However, tickets to ride the first-class *El Dorado* are available to book in advance online; in addition, groups interested in reserving the *El Dorado* for an exclusive engagement on a regularly scheduled excursion train should call 916-322-7112.

For more information about the California State Railroad Museum’s National Train Day activities or booking first-class train rides, please visit [www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org](http://www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org) or call 916-445-6645. For more information about the Sacramento History Museum, please call 916-808-7059 or visit [www.historicoldsac.org](http://www.historicoldsac.org). And, for more information about National Train Day in general and the many activities happening nationwide, please visit [www.nationaltrainday.com](http://www.nationaltrainday.com) (which is updated frequently). In addition, rail passengers and enthusiasts are invited to share why trains matter to them via Facebook ([www.facebook.com/NationalTrainDay](http://www.facebook.com/NationalTrainDay)) or Twitter @natltrainday.

#### **About the California State Railroad Museum**

*Operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the non-profit California State Railroad Museum Foundation, the California State Railroad Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Widely regarded as North America’s finest and most popular railroad museum, the complex of facilities includes the 100,000-square foot Railroad History Museum plus the reconstructed Central Pacific Railroad Passenger Station and Freight Depot, 1849 Eagle Theatre, and Big Four and Dingley Spice Mill commercial buildings in Old Sacramento. For 24-hour information, visit [www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org](http://www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org) or call (916) 445-6645.*

#### **About Amtrak®**

*Amtrak is America’s Railroad®, the nation’s intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 31.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2012 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on [facebook.com/Amtrak](http://facebook.com/Amtrak) and follow us at [twitter.com/Amtrak](http://twitter.com/Amtrak).*

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